

Title of Meeting:	Inspire Board –Minutes
Location:	Nottinghamshire Archives & *Teams Meeting
Date:	Tuesday 10th February 2026
Time:	4 to 6pm
Attendees:	Sophie Collier - Member Elected Director *Richard Darrington – NCC Appointed Mark Dorrington – Member Elected Director, vice chair *Vicki Dunstall – Co Opted Director Peter Gaw – Chief Executive Officer, Inspire John Hess – Co-Opted Director *Jackie Hewlett-Davies – Member Elected Director Cllr Dawn Justice – NCC Appointed Margot Madin – Co Opted Director, chair *Emma Pitchford – Staff Elected Director
Invited:	Margaret Anderson – Chief Finance Officer, Inspire Kirsty Ellis – Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Inspire Pippa Guthrie – Quality & Student Services Manager, Inspire Katharine Say – Executive Officer, Inspire *Claudine White – Head of Communities, Culture and Protection, NCC

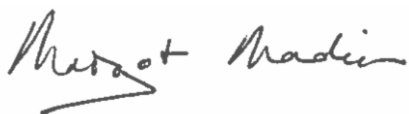
Agenda No.	Agenda Subject	Action
1.	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aidan La Mola – Commissioner, NCC Diana Meale – Member Elected Director 	
2.	<u>Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members then agreed that the minutes from 25th November 2025 were a true and accurate record and were happy to approve. Matters arising – item 5, online financial session to be arranged. 	<u>MA</u>
3.	<u>Declaration of Conflicts and Interests</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DJ noted she is a councillor for Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). 	
4.	<u>CEO Update</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG presented his report for December 2025 to February 2026 that relates to the Inspire Forward Plan. <u>Staff Annual Leave Allocation</u> – Inspire staff on Inspire terms and conditions (all those employed since April 2016) have a lower level of annual leave than those transferred from Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). Having two sets of terms and conditions has not been ideal and has been a recruitment and retention issue especially within Inspire College. It is proposed to increase the basic allocation to 28 days, rising to 30 days after 5 years’ service and these additional costs have been included in the budget. SC asked if there are any plans to look at the difference in pay at weekends. PG replied not at the moment. JH asked what the current ratio is for legacy versus Inspire staff. PG confirmed that the balance is now moving towards those on Inspire terms and conditions (more than 50%). <u>Finances</u> – PG noted the huge amount of work it has taken in setting a small deficit budget and thanked MA and the finance team for a smooth and effective process. <u>Community Makers</u> – the volunteering hours target has been met. MM asked why there aren’t any heritage 2025/26 targets on the dashboard table. PG explained that this is the first year of reporting and targets will be set going forward. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Forward Plan April 2026 to March 2028</u> – the senior management team and board members reviewed and refined the Inspire’s values and overall feedback is that the current plan is fit for purpose. PG welcomed any further comments or suggestions. The corporate plan and strategic issues will be brought to the board in May. • <u>Safeguarding</u> – PG welcomed Pippa Guthrie into the new role of Quality and Student Services Manager and designated Safeguarding Lead. PGuthrie will attend future board meetings and provide regular updates to ensure safeguarding governance continues at the correct level. DM is the appointed board safeguarding lead and liaising with PGuthrie. • <u>Culture & Heritage Committee</u> – the impact of the Hodge review of the Arts Council England (ACE) has already meant a reduction in scrutiny of the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) activity plan, investment principles and financial reporting which will reduce the work of the committee. PG presented three options – to continue meeting 4 times a year, to reduce the number of meetings or to cease the committee. MD asked what ACE will now require for NPO and what level of business would come out of ceasing the committee and would this make the main board agenda unmanageable. MD was reluctant to cease the committee all together as members still have not seen the Heritage strategy but would consider a reduction in meetings. JHD was also in support of continuing the committee and all agreed that due to the lighter load to approve option one of a minimum of 2 and up to 3 meetings a year if required. PG to update the terms of reference. • <u>Board Membership Co-opted Director vacancy</u> - PG met Ruth Hyde, former CEO of Broxtowe Borough Council who is interested in joining the board. The next step will be to form an appointment panel and interview Ruth. • <u>Board Membership Term Extension</u> – MM briefly left the room whilst members voted unanimously to approve an exceptional circumstance (rules of the society 68 (a)) so that MM can continue for a third term in light of her recent appointment to chair and maintaining stability whilst going through the local government reorganisation (LGR). • <u>Sutton in Ashfield Library</u> - JH asked what the timescales are for relocation. PG confirmed that NCC is on the cusp of approving the business case for moving to the site on Brook Street and DJ noted that all parties are keen to announce the good news for Sutton. • <u>Pride in Place</u> - JHD asked if there were any further details. PG explained Inspire had put forward a range of bids for Mansfield last Autumn and that all of the districts are all at slightly different stages. <p>The board noted the progress of the organisation and range of issues. The board approved the changes in annual allocations for Inspire staff. The board approved the changes to the Forward Plan 2026 – 28. The board accepted a safeguarding update report is presented to each board meeting. The board agreed that the Culture & Heritage Committee should continue to meet between 2 or 3 times a year. The board approved the extension of MM as a board member for up to another 3 years.</p>	<p><u>PG</u></p> <p><u>PG</u></p>
5.	<p><u>Finance Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA presented period 8 management accounts for April to November 2025 which shows a favourable outturn compared with budget for this period, before the movement of funds of £837k. The reforecast shows a deficit of £47k which is an £80k better position than the originally budgeted deficit of £127k and £42k better than the previous reforecast. MA is optimistic that the period 9 forecast will result in a break even position. • The forecast includes the impact of the service reviews and withdrawal of services at Dukeries College which will reduce costs in the long term but in the short term have resulted in an estimated pension and redundancy strain of £550k. It is assumed that NCC will support the costs for archives and support staff. A review of the Learning reserve shows that it can withstand supporting the redundancy costs for Learning staff. The Finance & Audit Committee recommended this approach at the meeting on 3rd February 2026. • MA presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) through to March 2028. The 2026/27 and 2027/28 figures include an estimated pay award of 2.5% and assume NCC will fund for contracted services. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Music service is in a much better position and is set to make a surplus due to new staffing hours, not offering free terms and support received for national insurance and Teachers' pensions contribution but still uncertainty so assumed the worst case scenario. • The Finance & Audit committee have approved and recommend to the board the movement of £403k from unrestricted to designated funds for Capacity to Change resulting from LGR, support of projects in 2026/27, removal and reconfiguration of Records Management Store (RMS) and music store and some match funding. This will still keep £1.2M in unrestricted reserves in line with the Reserves policy. • Savings have been made as a result of staffing restructures, review and streamlining of Music service offer and staffing savings due to the delay of ICT separation from NCC. • MD was pleased to see £52k forecast expenditure on new burdens. MD asked for more detail regarding the reconfiguration of RMS and the Music Store and PG confirmed that there is sufficient capacity at Sherwood Energy Village for all of RMS. <p>The Board noted the Period 8 25/26 Management Accounts and Reforecast Position. The Board approved the use of Learning restricted funds to fund the redundancy and pension strain costs resulting from the Learning service review, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee. The Board noted the Forecast 2025/26 Reserves Position. The Board noted the Medium Term Financial Plan and approved the movements from unrestricted to designated reserves, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee. The Board noted the Balance Sheet as at 30/11/2025. The Board noted the Cash Flow for December 2025 – March 2027.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Budget Approval 2026/27</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA presented the proposed 2026/27 budget for Inspire. The organisation has achieved a balanced outturn or small surplus every year since 2016. The budget is set at £103k deficit position (lowest ever set) and includes an estimated 2.5% pay award and corresponding income from NCC to cover inflationary increases for contracted services. It also includes the changes to employer pension contribution rate from 19.4% to 20.7% for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). • MA asked members to note a change from previous years that property repairs and maintenance management is transferring to NCC. <p>The Board approved the proposed 26/27 budget and its impact on reserves, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee. The Board approved the increase in annual leave for non-TUPed staff, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee. The Board approved the movement of £403k of Unrestricted Funds to Designated Funds to support match funding requirements and future projects, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Music Hub Partnership Board (NNMHPB) Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JH gave context and background to the merging of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire music hubs and explained the responsibility of the partnership board to check, challenge and champion the strategic decisions on how it spends funds for music education. • JH noted it is early days for the coming together of the two well established organisations and the key will be scrutiny and ensuring it delivers on the ground. The partnership board now includes the priority areas of Ashfield and Mansfield as well as the city. • PG noted that the hub consortium (Inspire and NMS) will be delivering the music education plan but that Inspire as the Hub Lead Organisation (HLO) has overall governance responsibility and risk for the finances and performance of the hub. <p>The board noted the progress of the music hub.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Risk Log & Annual Review of Approach to Risk Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each risk area is reviewed by the leadership team every quarter and summary report presented at each board meeting. KE advised that all items had remained the same and 	

	<p>the largest risk continues to be LGR. MM asked if Inspire should be communicating with other authorities in county. PG advised that Inspire is having initial discussions and working with colleagues across the county and in the city and will utilise a soft advocacy approach through 10th birthday celebration events to showcase the reach and impact of the service. DJ added that NCC are doing no regrets work, to look for opportunities for development and commended the use of advocacy work. PG advised that the leadership team are very cognisant of the risk and will continue to reassure staff that the organisation will have the right approach and capacity whatever the outcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE encouraged members to discuss Inspire's risk approach, whether the framework is fit for purpose, whether the board has the right information and assurance if the risk appetite is appropriate in the current environment. Members agreed that they look carefully at the reports and presentations provided throughout the year and consider risk at each main board meeting as well as the financial risk log at the Finance & Audit committee meeting. • PG agreed that Inspire is in a good place but advised there will be a piece of upcoming work within the annual review of financial regulations to ensure reserve levels are correct. <p>The board noted the risk register. The board agreed that the approach to risk management is robust and recommended to continue with the current reporting and procedures.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Safeguarding Briefing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGuthrie advised that reporting mechanisms are in place and are working effectively across Inspire. Safeguarding incidents are reviewed regularly by the safeguarding lead and will be presented to the board for review and scrutiny. • Incidents are slightly higher compared to last and previous years. This reflects the reporting of complex needs and that staff are well trained and more vigilant. There is also a new learning management system (EBS) for reporting safeguarding concerns and ongoing activity for a more joined approach to submitting safeguarding concerns. The cross Inspire Safeguarding and Prevent working group meet and oversee practice and have focused on reporting and strengthening in non-learning environments. • Safeguarding within Learning was last reviewed by Ofsted in June 2023. PGuthrie is confident that risks are well managed and Inspire Learning will meet the new framework. Members can watch Ofsted and safeguarding updates via the Board SharePoint. • All board members are requested to complete the governance training as soon as possible and to inform KS. <p>The board noted the contents of the report.</p>	<u>ALL</u>
10.	<p><u>Health & Safety Annual Report & Policy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KE presented the annual report to inform and update members on Inspire's Health & Safety (H&S) performance and activities. There were a similar number of incidents recorded in 2025 compared with 2024 and as before anti-social behaviour remains the most common type of incident. Inspire continues to maintain a zero tolerance approach and is currently delivering Dealing with Challenging Behaviour training for library staff and working with NCC to install CCTV in several sites. • There was no follow up or issues raised following the Riddor-reportable incident at Newark Library last year. • KE highlighted the board's H&S Management System responsibilities and advised that there are no amendments to the H&S policy this time. <p>The board noted the contents of the report and approved the policy statement.</p>	
11.	<p><u>Policy Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual & Special Leave Policy – already taken through Inspire Leadership Team and trade unions. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality Policy – updated with FREDIE (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement) principles. Wellbeing Policy – previously known as Managing Stress in the Workplace. <p>The board approved the policies.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Annual Volunteering Review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KE presented a progress report on volunteering over the last year and the proposed plan for the next 12 months. There are now 389 active volunteers and volunteering groups and opportunities continue to grow across Inspire with forthcoming work in a review of the home delivery service, continued promotion of Duke of Edinburgh and development of ESOL conversation hubs. Members agreed it was all very positive news. MM asked if any data cleansing was required. KE to check. <p>The board noted the report and work plan for 2026.</p>	<u>KE</u>
13.	<p><u>Committee Reports & Minutes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture & Heritage - 02/12/2025 NNMHPB - 09/12/2025 Finance & Audit - 03/02/2026 <p>The board noted the minutes.</p>	
14.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members to submit any training requests or items to be added to the board forward plan. MM commented that time permitting, the service spotlights are very informative and helpful. JH asked about the impact of AI on the service. KE advised that an AI policy will be brought to the next meeting for discussion. A video of the staff conference keynote speaker on AI will be added to the board SharePoint. AGM 2026 – will now be a short, daytime, hybrid event. Date to be confirmed. 	<u>ALL</u>
15.	<p><u>Forthcoming meeting and events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tues 12th May 2026, 4 to 6pm – Beeston Library & Teams Tues 15th Sept 2026, 4 to 6pm – Worksop Library & Teams Tues 24th Nov 2026, 4 to 6pm – Beeston Library & Teams 	
17.	<p><u>Meeting Review – opportunity for chair/vice to discuss all aspects of the board meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	

Noting of approved minutes	
Name:	Margot Madin
Signature:	
Title:	Chair of Inspire Board
Date:	12/02/2026